San José State University  
Humanities Department  
RELS/HUM 191, Religion in America, Sections 1 & 2, Spring 2017

Course and Contact Information

Instructor: Jennifer Rycenga

Office Location: Clark 437

Telephone: (408) 924-1367 (office, rarely used); (650) 440-0063 (cell; texts OK)

Email: Jennifer.rycenga@sjsu.edu; jrycenga@earthlink.net (preferred)

Office Hours: 11:30 am – 2:30 pm Wednesdays and by appointment

Class Days/Time: Section 1: MW 9:00 – 10:15 am; Section 2: T 6:00 – 8:45 pm

Classroom: Section 1: Dudley Moorhead Hall 357; Section 2: Sweeney Hall 241

Prerequisites: Passage of the Writing Skills Test (WST) or ENGL/LLD 100A with a C or better (C- not accepted), and completion of Core General Education are prerequisite to all SJSU Studies courses. Completion of, or co-registration in, 100W is strongly recommended. A minimum aggregate GPA of 2.0 in GE Areas R, S, & V shall be required of all students.

GE/SJSU Studies Category: Area S (“Self, Society and Equality in the United States”)

Course Description

From the bountiful religious insights of Native Americans, to the dreams of religious freedom developed by many newcomers to these shores, this course will examine how religions in America have blossomed, migrated, transformed, and developed -- both in conjunction and in struggle with each other. By studying the religious conflicts and hopes of the peoples of this continent, we will develop critical methodologies for reading and evaluating spiritual and historical ideas, movements and writings. The course will focus on American religious creativity and diversity, with special interest in the interactions of different religions under conditions of cultural adaptation, immigration, oppression, and political-economic circumstances. The syllabus blends chronological history with experiential voices and thematic explorations.

Catalog Description: History of social and intellectual influence of religious groups, stressing their African-Asian-, European-, Latin- and Native-American roots. Highlights contact between groups, immigration, religious diversity and syncretism.

Technology for this Course

This course requires you to access the Canvas Learning Management System. Course materials, including the syllabus, assignments, readings, and more, will be posted on Canvas. Most assignments will be handed in via
Canvas. Once you are enrolled, your Canvas account will direct you to this course. This syllabus, and all other course materials, can be found on Canvas. Messaging of enrolled students will be conducted on Canvas.

There are **four requirements** for students participating in Canvas.

1. Please **include a picture** of yourself for the thumbnail on your Canvas profile. This enables me to connect your face, name, interests, and coursework.
2. Whenever possible, upload your assignments directly into the Canvas system using **MSWord**; that way I can make corrections, pose questions, and comment on your work directly.
3. Within the first three weeks, **initiate a conversation with me about yourself** and your interests in the course, in college, and asking specific questions you have for me as your professor. If you would rather **visit** during office hours, that is fine, too.
4. Act with respect, enthusiasm, evidence and specificity in relation to your fellow students and to course materials.

**Faculty Web Page**

My faculty web page can be found [here](#). It contains useful background information about your professor, and links to interesting pages about religion (this latter content is being moved gradually to Canvas). I also encourage Facebook users to like three Facebook pages connected to our department:

- American Studies at SJSU [https://www.facebook.com/groups/29260064778/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/29260064778/)
- Religious Studies at SJSU [https://www.facebook.com/relstudsjsu](https://www.facebook.com/relstudsjsu)
- Humanities Club at SJSU [https://www.facebook.com/groups/HumanitiesClubSJSU/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/HumanitiesClubSJSU/)

**Learning Outcomes**

Some bureaucratically-minded folks are convinced that upper-division college classes should be as tightly regulated as elementary school lesson plans. Your professor disagrees with their policies, and is not afraid to say so publicly. However, to fulfill the letter of the law (while scorning its spirit), I provide herewith the list of overly generalized learning objectives, and which assignments will form the basis of my assessment of your learning. Do be aware, though, that the real assessment - the grade you earn - is based on every assignment, and classroom participation, not just a few discrete events as described below. I regret having to waste space and time telling you this, but so goes the law.

**GE/SJSU Studies Learning Outcomes**

(***GELO** = General Education Learning Objectives, or a misspelled gelatinous mess)

Upon successful completion of this course:

1. Students shall be able to describe how religious, gender, ethnic, racial, class, sexual orientation, disability, and/or age identity are shaped by cultural and societal influences in contexts of equality and inequality. You will be assessed in your final exam questions and your papers.
2. Students shall be able to describe historical, social, political, and economic processes producing diversity, equality, and structured inequalities in the U.S. You will be assessed in the second quiz, which deals with comparisons across different religious groups, and in your research paper.
3. Students shall be able to describe social actions by religious, gender, ethnic, racial, class, sexual orientation, disability, and/or age groups leading to greater equality and social justice in the U.S. You will be assessed in your final exam questions and in the classroom journaling.
4. Students shall be able to recognize and appreciate constructive interactions between people from different cultural, racial, and ethnic groups in the U.S. You will be assessed in your final exam questions and in the classroom journaling.
Course Learning Outcomes (CLO)

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Present a typology of religious institutional distinctions (i.e. sects, movements, denominations, etc.) that exist in the United States. Assessed on final exam.
2. Develop a timeline of American history as understood through religious events. This will be assessed on final exam.
4. Live out the Humanities Department Goals, found here.

Course Requirements and Assignments

Note: None of these books have been ordered at the bookstore. It is your responsibility to acquire them through libraries, or purchase.

Textbook

You will choose and purchase one textbook, any edition (except as noted), from the list below. There is a regular, on-going assignment based on your use of the textbook of your choice.

- Albanese: America: Religion and Religions (RELS majors use this one)
- Gaustad and Schmidt: Religious History of America (any edition with BOTH authors)
- Lippy: Introducing American Religion
- Marty: Pilgrims in Their Own Land
- Corbett/Corbett-Hemeyer: Religion in America

Other Readings

One assignment will be based on an additional book that you will choose to read, in its entirety, from this list:

- Barry: Roger Williams and the Creation of the American Soul
- Leon-Portilla: The Broken Spears
- Paine: The Age of Reason
- Robinson: Appletopia: Media Technology & the Religious Imagination of Steve Jobs
- Haddad, Smith, Moore: Muslim Women in America: The Challenge of Islamic Identity Today
- White: Stranger at the Gate: To Be Gay and Christian in America
- Wilson: Blue Windows

Other equipment/material requirements

Students from past iterations of this class recommend having a good map of North America and a dictionary either accessible or in your possession!

Library Liaison

Peggy Cabrera
Phone: (408) 808-2034
Email: peggy.cabrera@sjsu.edu
Classroom Protocol

1. Try to be on time; it is both responsible and respectful.
2. If you must eat in class, try to bring something not overwhelmingly fragrant, or really noisy (e.g. Nacho Cheese Doritos would violate both rules), or really messy.
3. Please place your name prominently atop all written work, including in-class work.
4. Turn off all text messaging devices and cell phones. You may have your computer on for taking notes, but please don't surf the internet when the professor or your fellow students are talking. I am a realist: I know this is happening. But it is disrespectful, much as reading a newspaper when someone else is talking.
5. Be respectful of others in class discussions. Those who violate the common etiquette of good dialogue can receive a lower grade for class participation.
6. Be certain to check the professor's faculty page, and the page for this course, in case of changes, study guides, etc. Check the website before emailing the professor if you are looking for an assignment.
7. While this professor is often glued to her email account, she also has a penchant for traveling to remote natural areas without email or cell phone coverage. She will respond as quickly as she can, but do not expect always-instantaneous response.

Assignments and Grading Policy

This course will give you plenty of opportunities for written work!

TESTS: There are three quizzes and an in-class final exam. For each test you will receive a study guide at the end of the class session prior to the test. Some of the quizzes will be in take-home/computer-based formats.

TEXTBOOK JOURNAL: There is a weekly requirement to reflect on the overlaps, gaps, and divergences between the class lecture and the textbook you have chosen; these are called TJs (for “Textbook Journals”). The first TJ is mandatory; after that you do an additional nine across the semester, for a total of ten.

PARCs: There is another on-going assignment, of which you must do five across the semester. These PARCs consist of choosing a person, movement, tribe, or denomination named in class. PARCs come with strict guidelines and a grading rubric, available on Canvas. The acronym stands for “People, Articles, Reactions, and Comparisons.”

PAPERS: There are two short papers, one of which involves research. The first paper, called a “Religious Landscape Paper,” consists of an inventory of religious organizations and expressions in your (or any other American) neighborhood that you choose to visit. Instructions will be given on Canvas. The second paper is based on an additional book from the list provided for the course. Instructions for these papers will appear on Canvas. There will be at least three choices provided for each book. Unless otherwise noted, papers are to be typed and double-spaced with standard margins, and submitted to the Canvas interface. I insist that you use standard bibliographic formats, and proofread your papers. If grammar or spelling errors are rife throughout a paper, that will affect your grade. I will have no mercy on papers that are plagiarized, either intentionally or unintentionally. Full footnoting of all sources, including paraphrases, is required. This professor encourages re-writes on papers; college is the ideal time to practice your writing. Any paper with a grade below a A-level can be re-written without asking the professor for permission. For this class, this rule applies to the Local Landscape Paper and the Research Paper only. Please note carefully: the two Absolute Rules for re-writes!

The Two Absolute Rules for Rewrites

1) You must genuinely and substantively rewrite the paper, not just correct spelling and grammar errors. Indeed, you must rethink, reconceptualize, and revise (a "revision/re-vision" is a seeing-again, seeing something anew). Papers which are merely 'corrected' are unlikely to warrant a substantial change of grade. You should be self-critical, assessing how you can improve. This means both heeding my professorial advice, and spending the time to incorporate your own perception on how your work can improve.

2) You must hand in the graded original along with the new, revised version.
**Weight of Assignments**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quiz #1</td>
<td>05 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiz #2</td>
<td>05 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quiz #3</td>
<td>10 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local Religious Landscape paper</td>
<td>10 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textbook Journals (TJs) – 1.5 points each, once/week, best 10 of 12</td>
<td>15 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People, Articles, Reactions, Comparisons (PARCs), 3 points, 5 best</td>
<td>15 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Paper on Extra Book</td>
<td>20 %</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>20 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grades for all assignments follow a 100-point system:

- 98-100 = A+
- 97-92 = A
- 90-91 = A-
- 88-89 = B+
- 82-87 = B
- 80-81 = B-
- 78-79 = C+
- 72-77 = C
- 70-71 = C-
- 68-69 = D+
- 62-67 = D
- 60-61 = D-
- 00-59 = F
A Warning About Canvas Grades: Canvas’s calculations of your current and projected grade will not always be accurate. Primarily this stems from Canvas not knowing how to quantify work you’ve not handed. Therefore, in a course like this with regular steady work, do NOT be fooled by your overall Canvas grade: if you’re not handing in PARCs and TJs with regularity, your grade will suffer in the long run.

Your final grade for the TJs and PARCs can be aided by a steady improvement in trajectory, by doing the assignments more often, and by using complete sentences, making connections across the semester, and other indications that you are undertaking the assignment with academic seriousness and enthusiasm.

Class participation is encouraged. You can raise your hand at any point to ask for clarification or to raise a question. Strong, respectful participation will raise borderline grades; lack of participation will accord with no mercy shown to borderline grades.

This course must be passed with a C or better to qualify as an SJSU graduation requirement.

University Policies

Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. will be available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs’ Syllabus Information web page at http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/

Schedule: RELS/HUM 191, Religion in America, Spring 2017, Sections 1 & 2

This syllabus covers both sections. The dates shown are M, T, W of each week. The first and last date apply to section 1, while the middle date applies to section 2.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1    | Jan 30, 31, Feb 1 | Introduction to the Class and Each Other, and to Basics of Religious Studies  
**Assignment:** Ungraded in-class writing |
| 2    | Feb 6, 7, 8 | Basic Terms in the Study of Religion, Native American Religious Themes, Cosmologies and Cosmogonies  
Reading: Go over syllabus; other readings on Canvas |
| 3    | Feb 13, 14, 15 | Native American Religions: Histories and Continuities  
Readings: on Canvas |
| 4    | Feb 20, 21, 22 | Native American Religions: Histories and Continuities  
Readings: on Canvas |
| 5    | Feb 27, 28 March 1 | European Contact: 1492, the Introduction of Christianities, the Conquest of Mexico  
Reading: paralleling textbook and class  
**Assignment:** quiz #1 (in-class, study guide given Feb 21/22) |
| 6    | March 6, 7, 8 | European Colonies 1600-1700  
Reading: paralleling textbook and class |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 7    | March 13, 15, 16 | 1500-1800: Colonial Religion: Pilgrims, Puritans, Rebels, and Merchants  
Reading: paralleling textbook and class  
**Assignment:** Inventory of Local Religious Landscape, due March 16 |
| 8    | March 20, 21, 22 | Nineteenth Century I: Transcendentalism and Abolitionism  
Reading: paralleling textbook and class  
**Assignment:** quiz #2 (take-home, due date TBA) |
| 9    | April 3, 4, 5  | Nineteenth Century II: Revivals and New Denominations  
Reading: paralleling textbook and class |
| 10   | April 10, 11, 12 | Immigration from Europe: Catholicism  
Reading: paralleling textbook and class |
| 11   | April 17, 18, 19 | Immigration from Europe: Judaism  
Reading: paralleling textbook and class |
| 12   | April 24, 25, 26 | Immigration and Counter-Culture: Islam in North America  
Reading: paralleling textbook and class |
| 13   | May 1, 2, 3    | Immigration and Counter-Culture: Asian Religions in North America: Buddhism, Hinduism, Sikhism  
Reading: paralleling textbook and class  
**Assignment:** Short paper on additional book due May 3 |
| 14   | May 8, 9, 10   | The Social Gospel and the Fundamentalists: Left v. Right in American Religion  
Reading: paralleling textbook and class  
**Assignment:** Quiz #3 (online) |
| 15   | May 15, 16 (no class 17) | Religious Creativities in Contemporary America: Shifts in Contemporary Evangelicalism, Native American Renaissance, Lesbian and Gay Religions, Religious Pluralism  
Reading: paralleling textbook and class |
| Final Exam | M May 22 T May 23 | 7:15 – 9:30 am, DMH 357  
5:15 pm – 7:30 pm, Sweeney 241  
**You may attend whichever exam session you prefer** |
Reference Works in the Study of Religion (with MLK library call numbers)
Encyclopedia Judaica (DS102.8 E496, 16 vols.);
Encyclopedia of Monasticism (BL631 .E63 2000, 2 vols.);
The Encyclopedia of Islam (DS27 .E523 1986, 10 vols.);

Reference Works in the Study of American Religion
Encyclopedia of American Religion and Politics, Djupe & Olson, editors (BL2525 .D58 2003);
Encyclopedia of Religion in American Politics, Schultz & West, editors (BL2525 .E52 1999);
Encyclopedia of the American Religious Experience, Lippy and Williams, editors (BL 2525 .E53 1988, 3 vols.)
Religions and American Cultures: An Encyclopedia of Cultures, Diversity, and Traditions, Laderman and Lèon, editors (BL2525 .R448 2003, 3 vols.)
Bibliography -- some classics in the study of American religion (not an exhaustive list!)

This list also illustrates two kinds of bibliographic form. First is in MLA format, with annotations (annotations are not necessary in a paper assignment bibliography).


These second items are in social science format:

Adler, Margot


Deloria, Vine


Nash, June


Brown, Karen McCarthy


Morrie Yohai (1920-2010), Turkish-American, son of Jewish immigrants from Turkey: inventor of cheese doodles (e.g. Cheetoes)
Common Religious Studies Misspellings

I don't subtract for spelling when errors are incidental, but when they become endemic, I get annoyed. If I detect that you don't care about the work you hand in, I get very annoyed indeed. The words listed below are errors that not only occur commonly, but won't be detected by any computer Spell Check. Please watch for them!

**CORRECT**
- aisle (passageway)
- allot (v. divide and distribute)
- altar (n., platform used in ritual)
- angel (heavenly being)
- Arminian (a Protestant theology)
- ascetic (strict, severe, self-denying)
- border (boundary line)
- bored (uninterested)
- covenant (agreement)
- dual (having two parts)
- eerie (weird, uncanny)
- flee (v. escape, run away)
- hallow (v., make holy)
- holy (adj., sacred)
- immanent (internal, within)
- meditation (contemplation)
- midst (in the middle of)
- parish (ecclesiastical subdivision)
- prophet (person who speaks for god)
- public (open to the entire community)
- reign (royal rule, authority)
- rigid (inflexible, strict, severe)
- rite (ceremony, ritual)
- sacred (holy, religious)
- satan (chief demon in Christianity)
- suffering (pain)
- veil (covering for face and head)
- warrior (one who engages in war)
- wretched (miserable)

**INCORRECT**
- isle (island)
- a lot (many [two words])
- alter (v., to change)
- angle (point where lines meet)
- Armenian (about the region of Armenia)
- aesthetic (concerning beauty)
- boarder (lodger, renter)
- board (a piece of wood)
- convent (nuns' residence)
- duel (contest or combat b/w two people)
- Erie (Great Lake; Native Amer. tribe)
- flea (n. tiny biting insect)
- hollow (adj., empty)
- holly (a shrub w/ spiny leaves & berries)
- imminent (impending)
- eminent (distinguished)
- mediation (negotiation)
- mist (light fog, dew)
- perish (v. to die, to be destroyed)
- profit (benefit, financial gain)
- pubic (of or near the groin)
- rein (strap or harness)
- ridged (having a raised edge)
- right (correct)
- scared (afraid)
- satin (a highly smooth textile)
- suffrage (right to vote)
- vale (meadow)
- worrier (one who worries excessively)
- retched (vomited)

**Beware of confusing these common words**
- accept (to respond affirmatively)
- believe (verb)
- believe (noun)
- believes (plural noun)
- believe (verb)
- coarse (lacking in delicacy)
- creation (the act of creating)
- descent (lineage, or going downward)
- devout (verb)
- devout (adjective)
- deceased (dead - i.e., more than just ill)
- domed (covered with a circular roof)
- form (shape; noun and verb)
- from (preposition)
- gentle (mild, kindly, not rough)
- gentile (not Jewish)
- halo (nimbus, light encircling a head)
- hallow (make holy)
- insight (excellent perception)
- incite (to urge on)
- loose (not tight)
- performed (already formed)
- performed (done, acted)
- pray (verb)
- prays (verb)
- spirituality (one’s religious character)
- spiritualism (belief in spirits of the dead)
sight (the power of seeing)   site (a location)   cite (to quote)
verses (plural of verse)   versus (opposing, vs.)

Memorable Grammar Hints
your professor assembled this from various sources,
including similar lists by William Safire and various college writing centers.

1. Verbs has to agree with their subjects.
2. Prepositions are not words to end sentences with.
3. And don't start a sentence with a conjunction.
4. It is wrong to ever split an infinitive.
5. Avoid cliches like the plague. (They're old hat).
6. Always avoid annoying alliteration.
7. Be more or less specific.
8. Parenthetical remarks (however relevant) are (usually) unnecessary.
9. Also, too, never, ever use repetitive redundancies.
10. No sentence fragments. No comma splices, run-ons are bad too.
11. Contractions aren't helpful and shouldn't be used.
12. Foreign words and phrases are not apropos.
13. Do not be redundant; do not use more words than necessary; it's highly superfluous.
14. One should never generalize.
15. Comparisons are as bad as cliches.
16. Don't use no double negatives.
17. Eschew ampersands & abbreviations, etc.
19. Analogies in writing are like feathers on a snake.
20. The passive voice is to be ignored.
21. Eliminate commas, that are, not necessary. Parenthetical words however should be enclosed in commas.
22. Never use a big word when a diminutive one would suffice.
23. Kill all exclamation points!!!!
24. Use words correctly, irregardless of how others use them.
25. Understatement is probably not the best way to propose earth shattering ideas.
26. Use the apostrophe in it's proper place and omit it when its not needed.
27. As Ralph Waldo Emerson said, "I hate quotations. Tell me what you know."
28. If you've heard it once, you've heard it a thousand times: resist hyperbole; not one writer in a million can use it correctly.
29. Puns are for children, not groan readers.
30. Go around the barn at high noon to avoid colloquialisms.
31. Even if a mixed metaphor sings, it should be derailed.
32. Who needs rhetorical questions?
33. Exaggeration is a million times worse than understatement.
34. Profanity is for assholes.
35. Use italics for emphasis sparingly.
36. Proofread carefully to see if you any words out.